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How to Avoid Contracting Tuberculosis (Consumption)

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for the Prevention of Tuberculosis.

TRACT No. 1.

Tuberculosis, popularly known under the names of consumption, decline, scrofula, marasmus, wasting disease, inanition, lupus and white swelling, is a contagious disease, which means that every new case is produced by exposure to some other case. The knowledge of this fact gives the key note to personal avoidance of the disease. Fortunately science has demonstrated how a person suffering from tuberculosis can give it to another, and hence we know just what to do to avoid getting it. This knowledge moreover brings us great consolation, for it takes away all cause for fear and for oppressing the unfortunate victims of the disease. To avoid consumption ourselves we do not have to be unkind to our dear ones who have it, nor to deprive them of the society of their relatives, or in fact of any of the comforts of this life. The contagium of tuberculosis lies entirely and alone in the pus (matter) given off either in the form of spit in consumption, of matter in abscesses and in lupus, or of discharges from the bowels in marasmus and in tuberculosis of the bowels. *In short, pus (matter) given off from a tubercular sore, wherever it may be, is the means of giving the disease to somebody else.*

This tubercular pus can find its way into a healthy person principally in three ways: *First*, through the stomach; *second*, through the lungs, or *third*, through an open wound. **THROUGH THE STOMACH:** When people eat imperfectly cooked tuberculous meat, drink milk from badly diseased tubercular cows, eat food out of the same dishes or with the same eating utensils as consumptives, eat food with unwashed hands after having been in contact with tubercular patients, eat food that has been handled by persons suffering from tuberculosis, put coins, articles of toilet or other small objects that have been handled by persons suffering from tuberculosis into the mouth, use musical instruments or implements which, when in use, are placed to the lips or in the

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mouth and which have been used by consumptives, kiss upon the lips persons suffering from consumption, swallow tubercular pus in the form of dust which has accumulated in the throat and fauces during the act of respiration. *Secondly, THROUGH THE LUNGS:* When people inhale dried-up tubercular pus in the form of dust. *Thirdly, THROUGH WOUNDS:* When people get tubercular pus into an open cut or an abrasion of the skin.

Of the three ways in which the disease germ gets into the system that by the stomach is the most frequent. There is not so much danger of getting tuberculosis by eating meat and drinking milk that people need be afraid to use these articles. Thorough cooking destroys the bacillus tuberculosis and therefore removes all danger; but even this need not be resorted to in the case of milk when the dairyman is known to be careful and honest. If you do not know your dairyman you had better boil your milk. You can do most towards protecting yourself against tuberculous meat and milk however by exerting your influence to bring about proper government inspection of slaughter houses and dairies. If you are living in the same house with a consumptive be careful *not* to use the same dishes and eating utensils unless they have been first thoroughly boiled. Above all things *do not* eat of the delicacies which have been sent to the invalid and which he has eaten of, nor help him sip his wine. When you have been in contact with tubercular patients wash your hands at your earliest convenience, and be sure to wash them carefully before eating. *Do not* buy any food from a person suffering from tuberculosis, and as a matter of general precaution, have all food which goes on the table raw well washed. *Never put* coins, articles of toilet or other small objects into your mouth for they may have been used by a consumptive just before falling into your hands. This is particularly true of money and when such has been handled the hands ought to be washed before eating. *A most prudent habit to form is never to eat without first having carefully washed the hands.* *Do not* use a pipe, wind instrument, such as a flute or horn, or an instrument or implement which goes to the lips or into the mouth, that has been in use by a consumptive. *Do not* kiss persons on the mouth who are suffering from tuberculosis of the lungs when the disease has arrived at the stage when they begin to spit. Even with the cleanliest persons some sputa

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will adhere to the lips when a handkerchief has been used. When you have for any length of time been in a room with a consumptive, in which perfect sanitary measures are not practiced, *do not* swallow your spittle until you have had an opportunity to rinse your mouth and throat. If you are compelled to be about a consumptive frequently, endeavor to have him disinfect all tubercular pus immediately upon its being thrown off, for in this way you protect yourself against all danger. Should you not be in a position to see this carried out avoid as far as possible inhaling dust in the room or upon the premises. *Never allow* clothing or furniture that has been used by a consumptive or that has been kept in a house occupied by a consumptive to come into your house or room until it has been thoroughly disinfected. When you are compelled to change your residence be sure to make inquiry about the house into which you are going to move as to whether or not it has been occupied by a consumptive, and if it has, *see that it is thoroughly disinfected before you move into it.* The walls of the room which was occupied by the consumptive ought to be scraped and washed with some powerful disinfectant such as mercury or carbolic acid.

There is a great deal in family and individual predisposition to tuberculosis. If any of your family have died of the disease it is some evidence that you are prone to it, and you ought as a matter of prudence to keep away from it as much as possible. Individual predisposition is usually acquired and consists chiefly in a run-down condition or a deformed or improperly developed chest. If you are suffering from dyspepsia do not permit it to run on, but have it remedied at once. Stomach troubles are powerful predisposing causes of tuberculosis. Malnutrition of any kind predisposes to the disease. If you are losing weight, or if you find that your food disagrees with you in any way seek a remedy. Perfectly healthy digestion and assimilation are excellent guarantees against tuberculosis. *Don't forget,* however, that the excessive use of alcoholic drinks produces indigestion and irritability of the digestive tract and in this way becomes a prolific predisposing cause of tuberculosis. Loss of rest and worry become predisposing causes by lowering the nerve force of the body and thus interfering with digestion and assimilation. Have regular hours of sleep and avoid worry of all kind, but

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do this *especially* when you are unavoidably exposed to the disease. If you have a deformed or badly developed chest, you need to be especially careful not to expose yourself to tuberculosis. Develope and improve your chest by pulmonary gymnastics. Let your sleeping-room be well ventilated, and spend as much time as possible in the open air. If possible obtain employment which will keep you out-of-doors.

It has been shown that a non-porous soil predisposes to tuberculosis. If your dwelling-place is damp see that it is properly drained and made dry by means of cement. If you can select your home, choose it on a porous open soil.

Impress indelibly upon your mind that no new case of tuberculosis can arise without an old one. If you can therefore absolutely avoid cases and every source of infection, you are safe whatever predisposing cause you may labor under. With the present prevalence of the disease, however, no one can avoid every source of infection, and it therefore becomes important that predisposing causes as well as sources of infection should be avoided.

Should you desire to become a member of the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, you can do so by sending your name and one dollar to the Secretary,

E. LESLIE GILLIAMS,

727 WALNUT ST., PHILADELPHIA.